General Assembly

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Fifty-ninth session
Agenda item 75

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/59/470)*]

59/119. Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, 212 (III) of 19 November 1948, 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949 and all subsequent related resolutions, including resolution 58/93 of 9 December 2003,

Recalling also the relevant Security Council resolutions,

Having considered the report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East covering the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004,[1]

Taking note of the letter dated 30 September 2004 from the Chairperson of the Advisory Commission of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East addressed to the Commissioner-General,[2]

Deeply concerned about the continuing critical financial situation of the Agency and its effect on the continuing provision of necessary Agency services to the Palestine refugees, including its emergency-related and development programmes,

Recalling Articles 100, 104 and 105 of the Charter of the United Nations and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations,[3]

Recalling also the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel,[4]

Affirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,[5] to the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem,

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[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 13* (A/59/13).

[2] Ibid., p. viii.

[3] Resolution 22 A (I).

[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2051, No. 35457.

[5] Ibid., vol. 75, No. 973.

Aware of the continuing needs of the Palestine refugees throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory and in the other fields of operation, namely, in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic,

Gravely concerned about the increased suffering of the Palestine refugees, including that resulting from loss of life, injury and extensive destruction and damage to their shelters and properties, during the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern about the grave impact of the events that occurred in the Jenin refugee camp in April 2002, the Rafah refugee camp in May 2004 and the Jabaliya refugee camp in October 2004, including the loss of life, injury, destruction and displacement inflicted on many of the civilian inhabitants,

Aware of the extraordinary efforts being undertaken by the Agency for the repair or rebuilding of thousands of damaged or destroyed refugee shelters,

Aware also of the valuable work done by the refugee affairs officers of the Agency in providing protection to the Palestinian people, in particular Palestine refugees,

Gravely concerned about the endangerment of the safety of the Agency's staff and about the damage caused to facilities of the Agency as a result of Israeli military operations during the reporting period,

Deploring the killing of twelve Agency staff members by the Israeli occupying forces since September 2000,

Deploring also the killing and wounding of children in the Agency's schools by the Israeli occupying forces,

Expressing deep concern about the continuing policies of closure and severe restrictions, including the curfews, that have been imposed on the movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and which have had a grave impact on the socio-economic situation of the Palestine refugees and have greatly contributed to the dire humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people,

Deeply concerned about the continuing imposition of restrictions on the freedom of movement of the Agency's staff, vehicles and goods, the harassment and intimidation of the Agency's staff and the serious accusations made against the Agency, which proved to be unfounded, all of which undermine and obstruct the Agency's work, including its ability to provide its essential services, notably its education, health and relief and social services,

Recalling the signing, on 13 September 1993, of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements by the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization[6] and the subsequent implementation agreements,

Aware of the agreement between the Agency and the Government of Israel,

Taking note of the agreement reached on 24 June 1994, embodied in an exchange of letters between the Agency and the Palestine Liberation Organization,[7]

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[6] A/48/486-S/26560, annex.

[7] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 13* (A/49/13), annex I.

1. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, as well as to all of the staff of the Agency, for their tireless efforts and valuable work, particularly in the light of the increasingly difficult conditions during the past year;

2. *Also expresses its appreciation* to the Advisory Commission of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and requests it to continue its efforts and to keep the General Assembly informed of its activities, including the full implementation of Assembly decision 48/417 of 10 December 1993;

3. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East[8] and the efforts of the Working Group to assist in ensuring the financial security of the Agency, and requests the Secretary-General to provide the necessary services and assistance to the Working Group for the conduct of its work;

4. *Commends* the continuing efforts of the Commissioner-General to increase the budgetary transparency and efficiency of the Agency, as reflected in the Agency's programme budget for the biennium 2004–2005;[9]

5. *Acknowledges* the support provided by the host Governments to the Agency in the discharge of its duties;

6. *Welcomes* the convening, on 7 and 8 June 2004, of the Geneva conference by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation to increase support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency;

7. *Encourages* the Agency's further consideration of the needs and rights of children in its operations in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child;[10]

8. *Expresses concern* about the temporary relocation of the headquarters international staff of the Agency from Gaza City and the disruption of operations at the headquarters;

9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to comply fully with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;[5]

10. *Also calls upon* Israel to abide by Articles 100, 104 and 105 of the Charter of the United Nations and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations[3] in order to ensure the safety of the personnel of the Agency, the protection of its institutions and the safeguarding of the security of its facilities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem;

11. *Urges* the Government of Israel speedily to compensate the Agency for damage to its property and facilities resulting from actions by the Israeli side, particularly during the reporting period;

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[8] A/59/442.

[9] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 13*, addendum (A/58/13/Add.1).

[10] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

12. *Calls upon* Israel particularly to cease obstructing the movement of the staff, vehicles and supplies of the Agency and to cease the levying of extra fees and charges, which affect the Agency's operations detrimentally;

13. *Requests* the Commissioner-General to proceed with the issuance of identification cards for Palestine refugees and their descendants in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

14. *Affirms* that the functioning of the Agency remains essential in all fields of operation;

15. *Notes* the success of the Agency's microfinance and microenterprise programme, and calls upon the Agency, in close cooperation with the relevant agencies, to continue to contribute to the development of the economic and social stability of the Palestine refugees in all fields of operation;

16. *Reiterates its request* to the Commissioner-General to proceed with the modernization of the archives of the Agency through the Palestine Refugee Records Project, and to indicate the progress made in this regard in his report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session;

17. *Reiterates its previous appeals* to all States, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations to continue and to augment the special allocations for grants and scholarships for higher education to Palestine refugees in addition to their contributions to the regular budget of the Agency and to contribute to the establishment of vocational training centres for Palestine refugees, and requests the Agency to act as the recipient and trustee for the special allocations for grants and scholarships;

18. *Urges* all States, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations to continue and to increase their contributions to the Agency so as to ease the ongoing financial constraints, exacerbated by the current humanitarian situation on the ground, and to support the Agency's valuable work in assisting the Palestine refugees.

71st plenary meeting
10 December 2004